

11-1845/a

7 MAR 1959

card

Dr. Milton S. Eisenhower
President
Johns Hopkins University
Baltimore 18, Maryland

Dear Milton:

I want to let you know that I have received and read with much interest the Memorandum which you were so thoughtful to send me.

This is an area which some of my people here have been following with considerable interest and I have taken the liberty of forwarding it to them for information and a further study. I greatly appreciate your bringing it to my personal attention.

With warmest personal regards.

Sincerely,

SIGNED

Allen W. Dulles
Director

Q/DCI [] March 59
Retyped: 5 March 59
Distribution:
Orig - Addressee
1 - DCI
1 - Chief, NEA w/basic & encl.
1 - AAB
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STAT



MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Dulles

SUBJECT : Brief of a Memorandum from E. F. Penrose Requesting
the Embassy Transmit Message to Dr. Eisenhower.

Mr. Penrose begins his message by stating that Mrs. Penrose and he are on excellent terms with the students and faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences (University of Iraq in Baghdad) and that he continues to play an active role as Chairman of the Department of Economics and Member of the Council which is the governing body of the college.

Mr. Penrose advises that the revolution has brought about a setback in educational progress in Iraq. First, Kassem decreed that students who failed in their final year last year should be considered as automatically passed and students who failed or were dismissed in any year under the old regime should be entitled to come back and continue where they left off. When the medical faculty petitioned for permission to require such students to retake the examinations, they were met with refusal. The second aspect is the slackening of effort on the part of students and a weakening of faculty control.

Mr. Penrose goes on to advise that the most serious incidents occurred during and after the alleged plot of December 7. On the day before the plot was announced, there was great restlessness among the students and before noon they left the college and there were demonstrations in the streets. The broad split among the students corresponds to that in the country as a whole. Mr. Penrose stated that he is convinced there is little gained among the really intelligent Asians by placing counter-assertion against assertion on the questions of fact since Baghdad houses great numbers of wretchedly poor people living in mud huts and wearing ragged clothes who constitute mob material. With all these influences it is not surprising that a reasoned approach to politics and social reform is so difficult to achieve.

Mr. Penrose describes the unfortunate effects the resistance movement has on the students and mentions a case where a group defied the Acting Dean and said they were acting for higher authorities than him. Next day the Iraqi members of the faculty met and reached an unusual and impressive unity as they decided to hold a social party in honor of their victimized colleagues and they appointed a faculty to investigate the incident. Promising thought this was as evidence of the willingness, even of left wing faculty members, to draw the line at such lawlessness and such

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humiliation for academic authorities, the outcome has been unfavorable. The reply from the government failed to uphold the faculty, declined to discipline the students and said that the matter must be settled in a friendly spirit.

Mr. Penrose commented on the fact that these incidents create an increasing fear of insecurity among all classes opposed to Communism. He also pointed out that the future of education in Iraq is inseparably bound up with politics. At present, the authorities of the university and the colleges are almost helpless. Teachers and professors have perhaps the lowliest position in the state as Kassem and the Communists are determined not to offend the students in any way. Mr. Penrose states that it is most unwise now to interfere in the mere civil war in Iraq. The left wing is not all black nor is the nationalist group all white since he has found some able students who generally follow Communist direction do so out of attraction for Communist doctrines rather than out of hostility to the richer merchant and landlord class which they believe dominate the extreme Arab nationalists.

Mr. Penrose feels that the supporters abroad of Arab nationalism, such as the younger St. John Philby, Michael Adams and some American writers who have been in the Middle East are in danger of being one jump behind. If by Arab nationalism they mean the union into one state of the Arab peoples, they are pursuing a fantasy under present conditions. If they are pursuing a sort of federative union, that is exactly the form of Arab nationalism to which the Communists now give lip service. Mr. Penrose considers a definite Western alliance or even loose alignment with the Arab nationalists against their opponents would be a great error and would raise vehement anti-Western passions among the majority of the Iraqi population. Union with Egypt or domination by Russian Communists would be almost equally disastrous for Iraq. It might be hoped that Britain and Egypt will restore normal diplomatic and economic relations, beyond that it would be an error to get maneuvered into a position of being lined up with Egypt against Kassem.

Mr. Penrose concludes by pointing out that Red Chinese propaganda is very active in Baghdad and makes effective play of U. S. policy in blocking Red Chinese recognition and admission to the U. N.


AAB
6 March 1959